

2016 PAWS Frequently Asked Questions

Can students annotate their test booklets?

YES: Only a No. 2 pencil may be used, and students should be cautioned to not leave stray marks in the area of the answer for the test item.

Should I clean up stray marks after the test booklets or answer documents are handed in?

NO: Test Administrators should not open test booklets after they have been turned in. Do not review your students' answers for stray marks or circles that are not filled in completely. Follow the Marking Directions in the Directions for Administration and make sure students understand how to fill in the bubbles, but DO NOT go back and check or correct their marks.

Can I read through the test booklet while my students are taking the test? Can I look through the test booklet to ensure that my students have completed all of the test items?

NO: Test booklets and the test items are secure documents. Only the test takers are allowed to view the contents of the test booklets. The only time a test administrator should be reading the test booklet is when a student uses an accommodation that requires a reader or a scribe. If test administrators are interested in the questions used on the test, they can review the released test questions found on our website or attend one of the item, bias, or data review sessions hosted by WDE each summer. Please check our website in April for information about these review sessions.

Will students be using a reference sheet for math?

NO: The 2012 Wyoming content standards require that students "know the formulas for . . . and use them to solve problems;" (G.7.4) in certain math standards. For this content, the items require that the student know the formula. For content that does not require students to know a formula, the test items were written to include the information needed for solving the problem.

I have some resources I want to print for my students to use. Is it okay for me to do that?

NO: The only resources that students may use are identified on the allowable resources list on page 73 of the DFA.

What kind of calculators can our students use?

For the 2015 PAWS Math test, students may use a four function calculator.

Students ARE NOT allowed to use calculators that have any of the following features:

- Graphing calculators with limited processing capabilities such as a TI-83, TI-83 Plus, or TI-84.
- Computer Algebra System (CAS), such as:
TI-89, TI-92 Plus, TI-Nspire™, ALGEX2.0, ALGEX2.0 Plus, CFX-9970
- QWERTY keyboards (similar to typewriter keyboards)
- Calculators with attached electronic pens

How do we enter the accommodations? I could not do it through TOMS this year.

This year, WDE is collecting the accommodations information on the test booklets and answer documents. Test administrators will bubble in the accommodations information for each student on the individual test booklets and answer documents. Only the accommodations actually used on the test should be indicated. Also, accommodations for each content area must be entered.

Can test administrators provide definitions of words that are in a reading passage or test items?

NO: All test questions have been through bias and content review with Wyoming teachers. The items, including the vocabulary, on the test have been deemed to be grade level appropriate. Test administrators may not provide definitions to words in a test item or passage.

Can students use “sticky notes” on the test?

No: The only allowable resources to be used are on the allowable resources page in the DFA. These resources can also be found on our website at: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/download/Allowable-Resources-Guidelines.pdf> “Sticky notes” also present a problem for the scanners that score the test. Residue from the notes can cause the scanner to malfunction.

Can students use a scantron window to assist in transferring answers from the test booklet to the answer document?

NO: A scantron window is not an allowable tool.

Can you please clarify this for me - I know that sections must be done in order (Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3) but if a student misses the day their class does Reading 1 and then comes the day the class does Reading 2, he or she would take Reading 1 (not 2 like the rest of the group), correct?

YES: Testing sections must be administered in the numerical order. Each student must take section 1 first, then 2, and then 3. Students who miss a section must start with the first (or next) section in the series. **Do not skip sections.**

In the past we have had parents pick up their child for an appointment in town while we are in the middle of the test. Can that student begin the test where he or she left off when returning to school?

NO: Once a testing section is started, it must be completed in one sitting. If parents pull their child from the testing room, that student is unable to finish that section of the test. How your building/district handles this is a local policy decision, but testing protocols require that the student cannot go back to a section once they have handed in their booklet.

This is true for students on IEP's and 504 Plans -- when you give these students extra time for testing, be sure you schedule the test early enough to be able give the students enough time to complete each section. This would mean considering scheduling so even a student who needs 2X as much time on the test could complete the section before mid morning recess or certainly before lunch.

A Middle school student does not have a general response accommodation on IEP, however will not be successful with the bubble sheet format. Can student write answer in test booklet and have certified instructor fill in corresponding bubble?

This falls under Response Accommodation #14: use of a scribe. The student can dictate to the scribe his or her response to each question, and the scribe will record it on the answer document. This is a one-to-one (question-to-answer) and (student to scribe) relationship. Each question must be bubbled by the scribe as the student completes each question. It is not acceptable for the student to mark the answers in the test booklet and then have a scribe or certified staff member (or anyone else) transcribe the answers to the answer document after the student has finished testing. Under Response Accommodation #19 the student can have a certified staff member sit with him or her to monitor the placement of student answers, but in this scenario, the person monitoring does not mark the answer for the student, only monitors the placement of the answer.

Please follow the guidelines for updating the student's IEP to include this testing accommodation. We did provide districts notification of this change last spring and early this fall, so I'm sorry you were unaware of the change. We no longer have the guidance that an accommodation be on the IEP 90 days before the test, so you are ok there.

A sample answer document for grades 6-8 can be found on our website at the following link: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/downloads/assessments/2015/grades-6-8-sample-answer-document-watermarked.pdf> Perhaps students could practice with this (our released items are also on the website) on the grade level pages at the following link: <http://edu.wyoming.gov/educators/assessment/paws/>

A 4th grade student has use of calculator and multiplication chart as IEP accommodation. Can student use those on 2015 PAWS?

No - this changes the construct of items requiring that students perform calculations. Students taking the PAWS are allowed standard accommodations, and these fall under non-standard accommodations. See page 32 of the document at the following link, which is also on our website: http://edu.wyoming.gov/downloads/assessments/PAWS_Accommodations_Manual.pdf

With new use of the bubble sheet, can students in grades 6-8 mark in their test booklet to help them keep track of where they are (i.e. mark off the numbers of math problems as they complete them)? This question was asked by a teacher of grades 7-12 who said this is allowed on ACT to help students keep questions aligned to bubble sheet grid.

YES: These are non-scannable documents and can be written in. Please use pencils only, to avoid the possibility of stray ink marks landing on the answer document.

I have a word wall/number line posted in my classroom. Can I leave this up during the PAWS test?

No: A word wall/number line is not an allowable resource, and therefore must be removed or covered up. Desks and tables where students are testing should also be cleared of such resources.